

**VETERANS SERVICES FOUNDATION MEETING
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2004
VIRGINIA WAR MEMORIAL
RICHMOND, VA**

CALL TO ORDER – Board Vice Chair Lydia Dudley

ROLL CALL -

Members: Lydia Dudley, Donald Gardner, Margaret Eure, Leroy Gross, Gilmer Minor, John Hanson

DVS: Commissioner Jon Mangis, Chief Deputy Commissioner Bert Boyd, Bonnie Giese, Financial Services Manager
Geneva Claybrook, Executive Services Manager

Chairman Hanson arrives and assumes Chair

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 20, 2003

Discussion: Margaret Eure noted her name was included in the minutes as attending; however, she was not in attendance.

MOTION: Gilmer Minor moved that the minutes of the November 20, 2003 Veterans Service Foundation Meeting be approved with the one noted correction. Lydia Dudley seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

ISSUE – Handouts

**Bio's of Foundation members
Departmental Financial Needs
Sample By-laws
Financial Fund Information
Freedom of Information Act**

Discussion

Jon Mangis announced that today's handouts included the Bio's of Foundation members, a sample of By-laws of the Virginia Veterans Care Center (VVCC) and the Freedom of Information Act. Additionally, there was a handout addressing the Canteen at VVCC.

He then addressed the Cost Estimate of the Department of Veterans Services training conference. He referenced a handout and noted the cost would be approximately \$14,000.00. His office has received a list of requests listing computers, software, TV's as well as additional costs for training. He was not prepared to tender the entire list as to date there has not been a discussion with management or a prioritization.

Action

Commissioner Mangis will review the list of requests and needs and bring it back to the Foundation for a discussion.

ISSUE: Fees for distinctive license plates

Discussion

Commissioner Mangis has spoken with the Department of Motor Vehicles, and learned that there were over 180 different types of distinctive plates, and there is an “over and above” charge for these plates. The organization receives a percentage of the first 1000 license plates sold. All revenue over the first 1000 is kept by the State. The organization needs to set up a bank account, have an address for deliveries, and have legislative approval. There must be 350 signatures of people who have prepaid \$10.00 each for the tags. The tags are then, an additional \$25.00. He remarked that the proceeds of the veterans license plates in the State of Oregon go to the Veterans Care Center there.

Recommendation

Donald Gardner recommended that a meeting be arranged with the Commissioner’s Office, the Secretary of Administration and the Secretary of Transportation, to discuss how proceeds from the sale of non-revenue sharing license plates (military & veteran) can be channeled into the Veterans Fund. This was apparently a recommendation of the original commission report and the Governor’s Executive order 40.

Action

Commissioner Mangis will arrange a meeting with the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of Administration, and the Division of Motor Vehicles, in order to facilitate a discussion of the possibility of revenue sharing of veteran/military license plate income.

ISSUE: FUNDS

Discussion:

Local Fund at VVCC - Bert Boyd, Bonnie Giese and Geneva Claybrook explained the operations of the Local Fund managed at the VVCC. (See Attachment) They explained that these funds were designated by the donors to be used at the VVCC for the activities, indigent needs, Canteen operations and Operation Holiday Spirit.

Federal Reimbursement for Wandergarden Project at VVCC – The cost of the Wandergarden project was \$900,000. State funds were matched 65/35% by a Federal Grant. The State paid for the project and the Federal Grant reimbursed.

A Maintenance Reserve of \$100,000 has been set aside, \$217,000 is the State's cost toward a grant by USDVA for renovations to the Care Center, leaving a balance of \$268,000 to be transferred to the Veterans Fund, which is an interest bearing account.

Donald Gardner remarked that the intent of the Commission on Veterans Affairs, a body appointed by the Governor, was to have all loose funds channeled into one place, once the Commissioner was in his place. Ms. Giese remarked that at the time the Commissioner took office there was not an accurate accounting of all funds. She stated that she is awaiting directions to move the funds to the Veterans Fund.

Action

MOTION: Margaret Eure moved that \$268,000 of the Federal Grant reimbursement for the Wandergarden project be moved to the Veterans Fund.

AMMENDED MOTION: Donald Gardner moved that the \$268,000 be moved with a full accounting of funds.

Discussion

Ms. Eure remarked that the first motion would have the \$268,000 moved immediately without having to await the accounting of the funds.

A financial report was requested on the original amount deposited and a copy of the last financial statement in order to know exactly what balance is to be transferred. The report will clearly show what transpired.

A comment was made regarding the VSO's, and how upset they might be when they find out funds are being transferred to Richmond. The State's portion of the Wandergarden project cost came from rental on the facility paid by the management companies. They were not general funds or donated funds by veterans or veteran organizations.

MOTION: Ms. Eure moved that \$268, 000 of the Federal Grant reimbursement for the Wandergarden project be moved to the Veterans Fund immediately, with an accounting and history of the Fund to follow. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Discussion

Jon Mangis requested \$14,500 come out of the \$268,000 for training.

Once again the discussion centered around having all funds in a central place with one person accountable for any monies. Donations should be made to the Foundation, which would enable the donor to get an IRS credit. They agreed this arrangement should give donors some reassurance. Mr. Boyd said all money is presently controlled by the Roanoke Office.

ISSUE: TRAINING PROGRAM

Discussion

Commissioner Mangis explained the training program would be for all counselors with up to date information on Federal laws and how to apply them when appealing cases. It would include “back-to-basics” on VA benefits; other related benefits; to include VA medical benefits for Virginia veterans. Many veterans may qualify for other services. Certifications will be offered for TRIP Training. Additionally, we would try to get the VSO's to help provide training for our staff. Training would begin before July 1, 2004.

It was suggested that Commissioner Mangis be given permission to go forward with the training program. There are no funds in the budget for training. (See Attachment)

Action Motion

MOTION: A motion was made by Gil Minor that after the transfer of funds is made Commissioner Mangis have the authority to plan a conference for training, not to exceed \$14,000 with an accounting for all expenditures. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

ISSUE: Designated and Undesignated Funds

Discussion The discussion centered on separating funds by designated and undesignated with a full accounting of funds by designation.

Action Motion

MOTION: Leroy Gross moved that a survey of any and all funds be made and available prior to the next meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

ISSUE: 100% Disabled Veteran

Discussion surrounded the fact that Foundation members did not think that Virginia has a property tax exemption, and to look at no real estate tax for the totally disabled veteran.

ISSUE: Personal Liability and coverage of Foundation members

Action Consult with the Assistant Attorney General

ISSUE: Organizational Chart

Discussion: Ms. Eure asked for an organizational chart with position, name, title, phone numbers, address, etc.

Action Commissioner Mangis will see that this is compiled and sent to the members.

ISSUE: 501C3 and Federal ID Tax Number

Discussion Will a Federal ID Tax number have to be obtained for solicitation of funds and the status of the Foundation as to 501c.

Action Ask the Assistant Attorney General if the Foundation is a 501c. Should it be? Is a State agency allowed to receive donations as a tax deductible organization and will the donor be able to write it off on Federal and State taxes. Also, does the Foundation need a Federal ID Tax number?

ISSUE: BY-LAWS

Discussion Ask the Assistant Attorney General to draft a basic set of by-laws to enable the Foundation members work from without beginning with scratch.

ISSUE: Thank you notes

Discussion Commissioner Mangis' office will send all thank you notes for donations.

ISSUE: Scheduling of Meetings

Discussion It has been difficult scheduling meetings. Ms. Claybrook will poll the Foundation to obtain the best possible meeting date, time and a place to meet.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.